

Washington, D.C. - Today, Congressman Joe Sestak voted in support of H.R. 3329, the Homes for Heroes Act, which he co-sponsored and which will provide shelter for homeless veterans and their families, and will help prevent low-income families from falling into homelessness. The measure passed 412 – 9. — “According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, on any given night there are 200,000 homeless Veterans in America, and nearly 400,000 could experience homelessness at some point within the year. This is unconscionable. These men and women wore the cloth of this nation and we must do what we can to ensure that they and their families are well cared for,” said Congressman Sestak. “This legislation aims to protect those who are homeless or who face the risk of becoming homeless.”

Specifically, this legislation establishes a supportive housing program at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for low-income veterans. The bill authorizes \$200 million in FY 2008 for an assistance program at HUD for supportive housing and services for low-income veterans. The bill authorizes grants to nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives to expand the supply of permanent housing for low-income veterans and their families and to provide supportive services through such housing to support the needs of such veteran families.

Additionally, this legislation establishes the position of Special Assistant for Veterans Affairs at HUD to coordinate services to homeless veterans and serve as a liaison to the Department of Veterans Affairs, state and local officials, and nonprofit service organizations.

It also establishes a \$200 million assistance program for supportive housing and services for low-income veterans and expands the highly successful HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program, authorizing 20,000 rental vouchers for Veterans annually and making the program permanent.

Furthermore, it authorizes \$1 million in HUD grants to assist housing and service providers with the execution of their housing projects for veterans assisted by HUD, fulfilling the planning and application process, and assisting veterans in obtaining permanent housing or homeless assistance.

Finally, it requires HUD to submit a comprehensive annual report to Congress on the housing needs of homeless veterans and the steps HUD has taken under the programs provided for in

the bill.

This legislation has been endorsed by numerous Veterans organizations including the American Legion Auxiliary, AMVETS, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.*

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